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April 15, 1999 LB 835

SENATOR SMITH: Mr. President, I move the adoption of E & R amendments to LB 835.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Question is the adoption of the E & R amendments to LB 835. Those in favor say aye. Those opposed nay. The amendments are adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next amendment I have, Senator Dierks, I have AM1192 with a note that you'd like to substitute AM1298 therefor.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: If there's no objection, so ordered. Senator Dierks. (AM1298, Legislative Journal pages 1478-1479.)

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, the amendment is one that we thought we need to do to clean up some of the language that some people had difficulties with. The reporting requirements of the bill as it...as it is now include a report be given to USDA and to the Nebraska Department of Agriculture three times a day. The amendment reduces the number to twice per day. Two times per day is in line with the voluntary reporting activity taking place at the present with the Agricultural Marketing Service and we think that this is a justified change, justified amendment. And the next thing we want to talk about is the number of animal units to be processed by a packer. We want to bring that, as under this bill, as increased from 50,000 per year to 150,000. The lower number, at 50,000, can consist of only about 200 animal units per day and we shouldn't be trying to keep smaller packers from increasing their productivity, because it creates additional opportunities for production...producers looking for a place to market their livestock, thus creating a little more competition. Some of the smaller packers in the state were going to be affected by this and they...this amendment would then create an opportunity for them to...to go ahead and do their business and maybe increase their numbers a little bit. So the 150,000 that we're going to is a reasonable request and doesn't begin to touch the major packers. And I want you to remember the reasons for the bill, of course, are price discovery, provide competition in the marketplace, and to add profitability to the production of livestock in this state.